

1. A conveyor belt having a length direction and a width direction, comprising:

a plurality of links rotatably and slidably mounted on a plurality of spaced elongate rods extending transversely to the length direction to define a movable flexible belt having
5 a support surface for supporting and conveying articles;

said links including edge links at opposite side edges of the belt, said edge links having aligned openings therethrough for receiving a rod;

said rods having radially enlarged ends defining a head on each end of the rod; and

said edge links rod capture means for engaging the head on the end of the rod to
10 retain the edge link at the end of the rod, said rod capture means comprising a shaped cavity in the link, and a shaped slot extending through a side edge of the link and communicating with the cavity, said shaped slot defining an undercut shoulder under which the head on the rod is captured when the head is inserted through said slot and into said cavity, thereby preventing the link from moving longitudinally on the rod.

2. A conveyor belt as claimed in claim 1, wherein:

said slot has a width slightly smaller than the diameter of the head but through which the head can be snap-fitted.

3. A conveyor belt as claimed in claim 2, wherein:

the slot is narrower at one end than the other, said narrower end defining said undercut shoulder.

4. A conveyor belt as claimed in claim 1, wherein:

said edge links have a leading end and a trailing end, and openings through each end for receiving a respective rod of a pair of spaced adjacent rods.

5. A conveyor belt as claimed in claim 4, wherein:

said rod capture means is formed in the trailing end of the edge link.

6. A conveyor belt as claimed in claim 1, wherein:

said links include at least one link module positioned on the rods between the edge links, said link module having a leading end and a trailing end, one of said ends being detachably connected to one rod and the other end being non-detachably connected to an adjacent rod, whereby said link module may be detached at its detachable end from said one rod and pivoted upwardly about the adjacent rod to provide space on said one rod for sliding an edge link inwardly on said one rod to space the end of that rod from the adjacent edge link, whereby a head can be formed on the spaced end of the rod without causing damage to the adjacent edge link.

7. A conveyor belt as claimed in claim 6, wherein:

the end of the link module that is detachably connected to a rod is the trailing end.

8. A conveyor belt as claimed in claim 7, wherein:

the link module comprises a plurality of generally A-shaped segments integrally joined together in side-by-side relationship and each having a pair of divergent legs extending from a narrow end, with adjacent segments oppositely oriented in respective forward and rearward directions relative to the length direction of the belt and sharing a common leg, whereby one A-shaped segment extends forwardly at its narrow end and an adjacent segment extends rearwardly at its narrow end.

9. A conveyor belt as claimed in claim 8, wherein:

a connecting web extends between the divergent legs of each segment approximately midway between the leading and trailing ends of the link module, the webs in adjacent segments being slightly offset from one another in the length direction of the belt.

10. A conveyor belt as claimed in claim 9, wherein:

aligned openings are formed through the legs near the narrow end of each segment for receiving the rods, whereby a rod is received in an opening at each end of the link module.

11. A conveyor belt as claimed in claim 10, wherein:

the openings are elongate in a direction parallel to the length direction of the belt, whereby the rods received in the openings can move toward and away from one another, and the links can move toward and away from one another in a direction parallel to the
5 length direction of the belt to enable the belt to negotiate turns.

12. A conveyor belt as claimed in claim 11, wherein:

a slot is formed in each leg in the trailing end of the link module, said slots opening into the elongate openings in those legs, whereby the trailing end of the link module can be snap-fitted onto an associated rod and removed therefrom.

13. A conveyor belt having a length direction and a width direction, comprising:

a plurality of links rotatably and slidably mounted on a plurality of spaced elongate rods extending transversely to the length direction to define a movable flexible belt having
5 a support surface for supporting and conveying articles;

said links including at least one link module having a leading end and a trailing end, and aligned openings extending through said leading and trailing ends for receiving respective adjacent rods; and

said trailing end of the link module being detachably connected to an associated
10 rod and said leading end being non-detachably connected to an associated rod, whereby the link module may detached from the rod at its trailing end and pivoted about the rod at its leading end to an upright position.

14. A conveyor belt as claimed in claim 13, wherein:

the link module comprises a plurality of generally A-shaped segments integrally joined together in side-by-side relationship and each having a pair of divergent legs extending from a narrow end, with adjacent segments oppositely oriented in respective
5 forward and rearward directions relative to the length direction of the belt and sharing a

common leg, whereby one A-shaped segment extends forwardly at its narrow end and an adjacent segment extends rearwardly at its narrow end.

15. A conveyor belt as claimed in claim 14, wherein:

the aligned openings in the leading and trailing ends of the link module are elongate in a direction parallel to the length direction of the belt, whereby the rods received in the openings can move toward and away from one another, and the links can move
5 toward and away from one another in a direction parallel to the length direction of the belt to enable the belt to negotiate turns.

16. A conveyor belt as claimed in claim 15, wherein:

a slot is formed in each leg in the trailing end of the link module, said slots opening into the elongate openings in those legs, whereby the trailing end of the link module can be snap-fitted onto an associated rod and removed therefrom.